

DATE: May 19, 2020

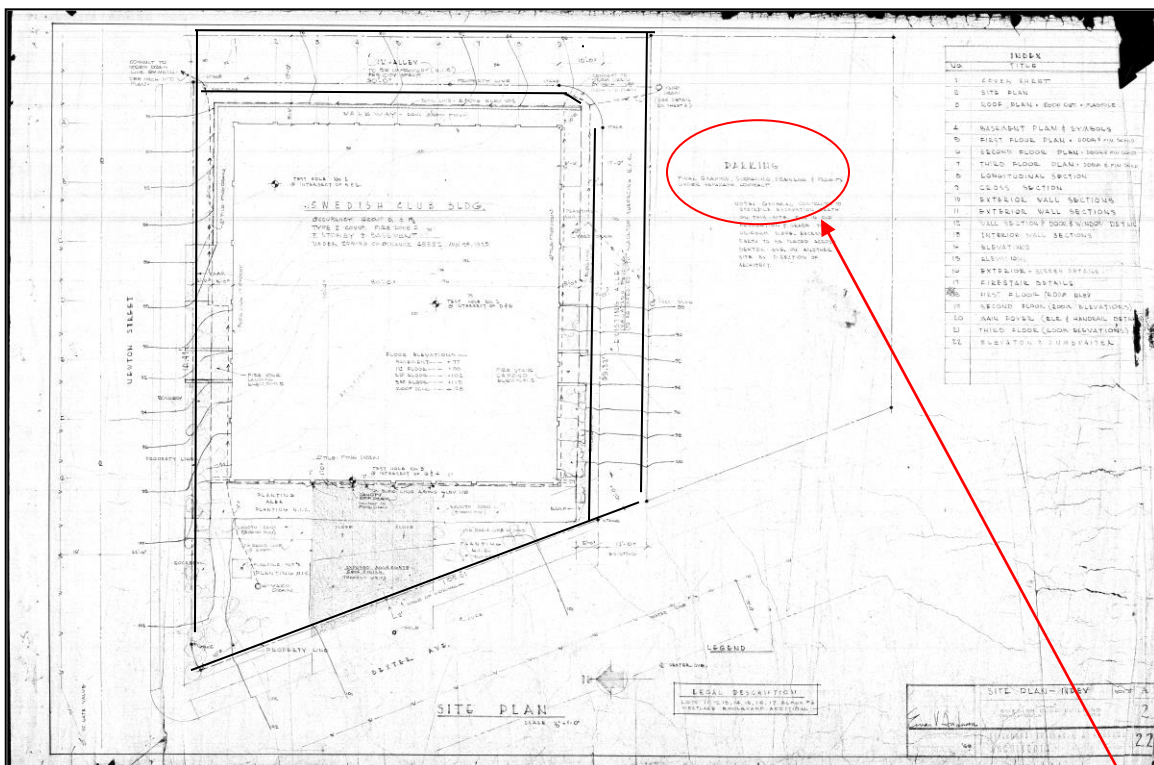
RE: The Swedish Club Landmark Designation & View Protection

BY: Susan Boyle, AIA, Principal

At the March 4, 2020 landmark nomination of the Swedish Club the Landmarks Preservation Board nominated the building and its site along with two separate parking lots – one to the east and one to the south. The inclusion of the two parking lots was an effort to consider view protection in response to comments about views of the building's south facade from distant locations on Dexter Avenue N. This memo cites reasons to support designation of the original site, and exclude the south and east parking lots.

1. Design Intent of the Original Building and Site

The designation should recognize the Swedish Club's history and the original building and site when the property was developed – the entry forecourt and landscaped front (west) yard and the landscaped north setback on Lots 13 – 17. To preserve the building and provide adequate space around it, it also could include the two 12'-wide driveways on the south and east, which became part of the property after two alleys were vacated in 1965 (Vacation Ordinance 87866 and 93621). This site was identified by a plan with notes and dimensions in the 1958 design drawings below. (The east parking lot was acquired sometime later and developed separately.)



A note in the 1958 site plan reads, "Parking – Final Grading, Surfacing, Drainage & Permits Under Separate Contract." This note was in reference to the south parking lot. (North is oriented to the left.)

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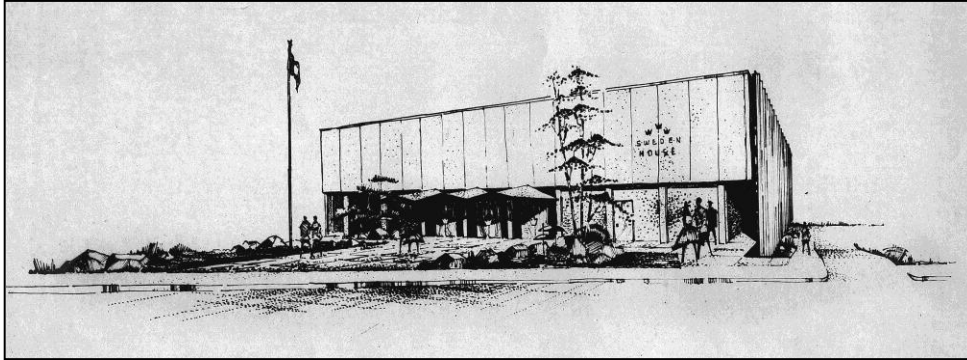
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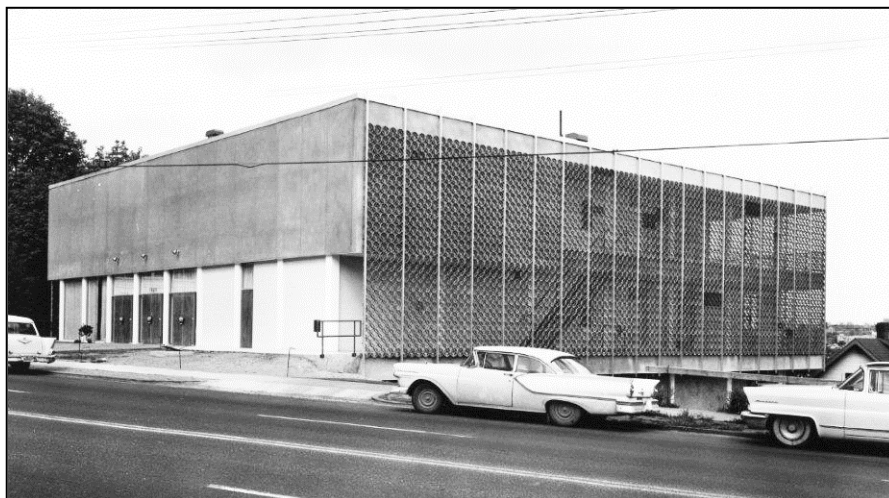
2. Historical Design Intent of the Original Building

The original design recognized the building's frontality, with the primary facade facing west onto Dexter Avenue N. The similar north and south facades were treated differently and as sides of the building.



Above, the architect's rendering, 1959.

Left and below left, the original building in 1960, prior to the installation of the front marquee.



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These two view, looking southeast show the primary west façade of the building and the paved and landscaped forecourt in April and May 1962 prior to the addition of the marquee.



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3. Seattle's SEPA and View Protection Policies

The Seattle Municipal Code already provides specific protection of public views and views of designated landmarks through other policies under SMC 25.05.675.P. Public View Protection, excerpted below:

1. Policy background
 - a. Seattle has a magnificent natural setting of greenery, mountains, and water; visual amenities and opportunities are an integral part of the City's environmental quality.
 - b. The City has developed particular sites for the public's enjoyment of views of mountains, water, and skyline and has many scenic routes and other public places where such views enhance one's experience . . .
 - d. **Authority provided through Chapter 25.12 is intended to preserve sites and structures which reflect significant elements of the City's historic heritage and to designate and regulate such sites and structures as historic landmarks.**
 - e. **The Land Use Code provides for the preservation of specified view corridors through setback requirements.**
 - f. **The Land Use Code attempts to protect private views through height and bulk controls and other zoning regulations . . .**
2. Policies
 - b. **1) It is the City's policy to protect public views of historic landmarks designated by the Landmarks Preservation Board that, because of their prominence of location or contrasts of siting, age, or scale, are easily identifiable visual features of their neighborhood or the City and contribute to the distinctive quality or identity of their neighborhood or the City. . .**
 - 2) A proposed project may be conditioned or denied to mitigate view impacts on historic landmarks, whether or not the project meets the criteria of the overview policy set forth in Section 25.05.665. . .
 - d. Mitigating measures may include, but are not limited to:
 - 1 & 2) Requiring a change in the height or bulk of the development.
 - 3) Requiring a redesign of the profile of the development.
 - 4) Requiring on-site view corridors or requiring enhancements to off-site view corridors.
 - 5) Relocating the project on the site.
 - 6) Requiring a reduction or rearrangement of walls, fences, or plant material; and
 - 7) Requiring a reduction or rearrangement of accessory structures . . .

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4. Fairness and Equity in the Designation Process

All landmark properties have unique features, and none are alike. Yet In several other similar cases, where a private club was located on a larger site, the Landmarks Preservation Board chose to designate only the site of the building and perimeter yards and not larger adjacent parcels:

- The Knights of Columbus, 700-722 E Union Street, is located on a corner site on First Hill with adjacent parking lots to the west side and back (north). The property was designated as the building with narrow site setbacks along the streets. The parking lots were excluded.
- The 1923 Women's University Club, 1105 6th Avenue, located on a downtown corner site with an abutting 1962 dining and parking facility, was designated as a building and its site. The adjacent garage was not designated.

There are other examples of designated historic properties, including non-profit, public, and community-based buildings, where the designation excluded portions of site vary:

- Designation of the Bricklayers Building/S Lake Union Trolley Maintenance Facility, located at a corner site in South Lake Union at 318 Fairview Ave N, excluded its site
- Designations of the Eagan House, within St. Mark's Greenbelt on N Capitol Hill, and the Golden Gardens Bath House within Golden Gardens Park, both excluded their sites
- The Montlake Community Center was designated with only a 10' -wide perimeter site
- Designations of a number of churches excluded their sites: Beacon Hill 1st Baptist Church, Capitol Hill United Methodist Church, Blessed Sacrament Church ("immediate site" included), Immaculate Conception Church and Seattle Buddhist Church
- Roosevelt High School's designation excluded greenhouses, running track, a 1968 annex, skybridge, and playfield, while the designation of Garfield High School excluded two parking lots
- Harborview and Providence Hospitals excluded portions of their site

5. Acknowledge the Needs of the Swedish Club

The Swedish Club is a 501(C3) non-profit organization, with no public funding or tax support, and to date has relied on membership fees and donations to support its mission, programs, and operations. It must retain the parking lots as assets for potential future development.

This is a critical need, particularly in the uncertain future. Flexibility to use the lots is critical to sustain and to support the club and its renovation and restoration of the mid-century building.

The south and east parking lots are assets, whose value will be significantly reduced if they are landmarked. The Swedish Club supports the designation of its building and the original site, but it cannot support the designation if it includes the parking lots.

End of Memo